



Western South Dakota Outdoor Report

Wildlife Division Region 1
March 6, 2015



Waterfowl – No report

Region 1 Wildlife Report

North District

DATE: 03-03-2015

Butte/Lawrence/Meade/Perkins Counties/Ziebach

Reporting Officers: DCOS Mike Apland, WCO Bill Eastman. WCO Keith Mutschler, WCO Ross Fees, WCO Fred Hein

Fishing -



With this year's winter weather, anglers need to pay special attention to current ice conditions. Remember ice conditions can change rapidly and may be different from your last trip out. Check ice before venturing out, look for open water, and avoid pressure ridges.

- **Butte County**
 - **Belle Fourche Res/Orman** – Angler success has slowed since earlier reports. Be careful of ice and look for open water. The ice conditions continue to change daily. Next week we are expecting warmer temperatures.
- **Lawrence**
 - Angler success and reports have deteriorated some in the past few weeks.
- **Meade County**
 - **Bear Butte lake** – This winter's activity has been slow. Ice conditions continue to change daily. This spring should offer great opportunity to catch a Northern!

- **Ft Meade** – Ice conditions are currently decent. Anglers have been catching the occasional perch and bass.
- **Durkee Lake** – Angler pressure has been limited, but a few nice northern pike and largemouth bass have been pulled through the ice this winter. Open water is visible.
- **Perkins County**
 - **Shadehill Reservoir** - Ice is unstable and caution should be used.
 - **Flat Creek** – Ice appears to be honeycombed in several areas. A few nice northern pike have been caught in the past week.
- **Ziebach Co.**
 - Some of our smaller stock dams had open water. Remaining ice should be considered unstable.

Small Game – No report

Big Game – No report



Other Seasons - Coyote numbers seem up this year and comparing low gas prices to fur prices, hunters/trappers are enjoying the challenge of harvesting coyotes.

Big Game



Mountain Lion – Hunters are having limited success. The recent snow will create the perfect opportunity for hunters to track. Lion Hunters are no allowed to utilize dogs to hunt Lions OUTSIDE OF THE BLACK HILLS.

Other Seasons - Coyote numbers seem up this year and comparing low gas prices to fur prices, hunters/trappers are enjoying the challenge of harvesting coyotes.

Land Report: This time of the year the department is signing up land for next years public hunting programs. If interested in learning more about such programs contact your local conservation officer.

Misc.

- **HuntSafe** – Classes are currently being scheduled across the state. Visit the GFP website under outdoor learning to check for upcoming classes in your area. If you don't see a class in your area, check periodically for updates to come.
- **Lawrence Co.** – Recently SDGFP has released Big Horn sheep in the Deadwood area. If you see the new additions, be careful and enjoy.



Central District

(SE Lawrence, S Meade, C Pennington, E Pennington, Haakon, N Jackson, NE Custer)

Reporting Officers: WCO's Brainard, Edwards, Geigle, Keeton, Thomsen
DCOS McCormick

DATE: 2/11/2015

Fishing Activity: Western South Dakota

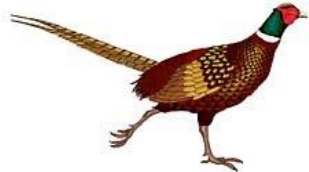
Black Hills area lakes and streams:



All lakes have been constantly starting to loose ice with the nice weather. Prairie Lakes seem to be extremely bad for ice condition with some opening up in spots and ice disappearing around the shores. Hills lakes are now starting to follow the same pattern. It is not recommended to ice fish under the current condition. If doing so exercise extreme caution and fish at your own risk.

Wildlife:

Elk: Closed
Deer: Closed
Small Game: Closed



Thank you for exercising fair chase hunting practices; securing permission to hunt on private property and helping to police our hunting heritage. Officers this fall have received handfuls of great calls regarding illegal hunting issues including baiting big game, shooting from motor vehicles, shooting from public roads, and failure to tag big game. Thank you for your support and observations.

If you witness hunting violations, you may choose to remain anonymous and assist officers by calling the TIPS hotline. The number is printed on the front cover of the 2014 fishing and hunting handbooks. Do your best to collect the license number of the vehicle involved? Your call will assist officers with making contact with the individuals involved and changing their future hunting behavior. Illegal hunting behavior is destructive to the future of our hunting heritage.

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Big Game – As I reported in an earlier weekly report, we have proposed the elk season at the regional level and the proposals are now being reviewed before being proposed to the Commission. We should expect to see some additional elk tags this fall.

Region 1 Wildlife Report

Southern District

Date: 3/2/2015

County: Bennett/East Shannon/South Jackson

Reporting Officer: WCO Tom Beck

Fishing Activity:

Angling activity for this period has been very slow. Most of the lakes and ponds have frozen over again, but ice thickness is marginal for ice fishing.



Hunting Report:

Waterfowl – There are lots and lots of ducks and geese in the area. It is a great time for photographing them. I've also seen quite a few trumpeter swans in harvested corn fields around the area also.

We will be having an open house in Martin on March 12th from 3 to 6 PM at the Library Community Room to discuss the Special Canada Goose Season. We will be discussing whether to continue the season as is, tweaking the present season, or changing the season to a unit like the surrounding counties have. If you are available that afternoon/evening, please stop in and let us know your thoughts. We will have pros and cons of each type of season for your consideration and we need your input.

Small Game – Nothing new to report.

Big Game – Nothing new to report.

District Report- Open House on March 12, 2015 from 3 to 6 PM at the Library Meeting Room on Main Street in Martin to discuss possible changes in the Goose Season for Bennett County. Please consider coming in and giving us your input on what our future goose season design should be

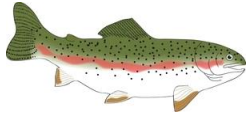


Date: 3/3/2015

County: West Custer/West Pennington

Reporting Officer: WCO Jacob Ehlert

Fishing: Fishing has been outrageous at Deerfield the last two weeks. Ice is thick, and people were keeping limits of small perch all around by noon on Saturday. Trout were suspended but were hammering spoons. Remember that minnows are prohibited on Trout Management lakes.



Big Game: Elk are beginning to drop their antlers. Deer have mostly dropped. Shed hunting has become a huge thing in recent years. If you want to shed hunt the area northwest of Jewell Cave is a good place to start. Be a good steward and try not to disturb the wintering animals.

District Report: If you want to look for shed antlers, get off the ATV and walk. Most of the problems we encounter are people chasing elk with ATVs, off road gridding and generally being careless and causing resource damage. We will be out this spring enforcing wildlife laws and actively searching for those violators.

If you have any information please call TIPS at 1-888-OVERBAG or your local Sheriff's Office. Making the call can prevent poachers from stealing YOUR public resource!



Date: 3/3/2015

County: East Custer/South Pennington

Reporting Officer: WCO Ron Tietsort

Fishing Activity:

With the last cold snap we have some pretty decent ice out there, but please use extreme caution when venturing on the ice. There could be some weak spots and with some new snow cover they could be hard to detect.

Sylvan and Legion lake have been producing some nice rainbows and the perch are biting at Stockade lake.

Lakota, Bismarck and Horse thief lakes have all been drained for the fall and winter, some fish have been removed and transferred to other waters. Work on cleaning out the sediment should be nearing its completion. We have also started the planning process on what species of fish to stock in these waters once they fill up. There will be some public input meetings, and the first one is scheduled for March 10th from 7 PM to 9 PM at the Custer USFS office.

Big Game:

Mountain lion season is in full swing and conditions are currently very good with the new snow we just acquired. We are now in the last month of the season and have a harvest of 34 mountain lions (as of this writing).

The season will end March 31 or when the quota of 75 lions or 50 female lions is met.

We are also in the 3rd interval of the CSP hound access season and 1 out of the 4 hunters has filled with a 125 pound male lion. This is a unique opportunity for hunters to hunt lions with the use of hounds. Lions taken in CSP will be counted in the quota.

The GFP commission adopted a rule to allow the use of hounds to hunt mountain lions on the prairie outside of the Black Hills; this went into effect on March 2nd.

Please be respectful of private property, we have been busy taking calls in regards to hunters trespassing on private lands this fall.

District Report:

There will be a Huntsafe class in Hill City starting April 23rd, the class will be held at the Hill city fire dept. classroom. You can check out the available classes on the GF&P website. As always, if you witness a wildlife violation, try to get as much information as you can and call your local Wildlife Conservation Officer or the tip hotline 1-888-683-7224.

Date: 3/4/2015

County: **Fall River**

Reporting Officer: WCO DJ Schroeder

Fishing Activity:

Conditions were not very favorable for fishing this past week. Not much to report.



Hunting Report:



Small Game - It has been encouraging to see a decent number of pheasants around the last few weeks. I think we are in the “population rebuilding phase”. Hopefully conditions will be decent the rest of the winter and into spring.

Big Game – Recent snows may increase the lion harvest in the central and southern hills. Without the snow cover - - it is very difficult to locate and work on the cats.

Trapping/Furbearers --- Season is winding down for most trappers. Bobcat harvest appeared to be down considerably this year. We will have to wait and see the final harvest data. Conditions were off and on - - and some trappers weren’t able to put in the effort as in the past years due to estimated prices for the fur.

Land Report:

We are approaching that time of the year where we begin signing up land for the Walk-In-Area program. If you have land or know someone who has an interest in the program - -- have them give us a call.

District Report:

We receive calls this time of the year about “poaching activity” and reports of hunting activity that looks suspicious. Please take the time to report these incidents. A lot of people assume that the hunting seasons are over and nothing is going on. There may actually be illegal activity going on and we could use your help to identify those incidents.

wildlife Report

Please take the time to record a license number and vehicle description when you witness a fish or game violation. Don’t hesitate to call the TIP’s Hotline or the local Sheriff’s Office and report the violators. You will help us all preserve the sport!!

District Report:

And as always, if you witness a wildlife violation, try to get as much information as you can and call your local Wildlife Conservation Officer or the tips hotline.

1-888-683-7224.

Land Report:

Trappers should be reminded that you must obtain permission to trap on Walk-In-Areas. Game, Fish and Parks is only leasing the hunting rights - - not the trapping privileges.

Waterfowl hunters need to be aware that it is illegal to hunt near the Fall River Feedlot - - it would be a violation of the “baiting” regulations. Please read your hunting handbook to refresh on the rules.

Hunting Report:



Small Game: Waterfowl hunters are still finding some goose hunting opportunities in certain areas. Duck season is over – so the “pressure” is going to be less in the area. Most of the area water has iced over now and the birds are spending a lot of time in the fields.

